

# ABSTRACT

A method and a device for detecting the phase of a four-stroke gasoline engine, a gasoline direct injection engine in particular. For reliable phase detection involving relatively little expense during a starting phase, a crankshaft is turned together with at least one piston; ignition is triggered via an ignition coil in at least two successive top dead centers of the piston without a supply of fuel. A primary current or a secondary current, or a primary voltage or a secondary voltage are measured in a measuring period which extends at least over a spark duration after the ignition. From the comparison of the measuring signals of successive ignitions, a conclusion is drawn as to which of the successive top dead centers is an ignition top dead center and which is a charge cycle top dead center.